

1. A vertebral implant for insertion between adjacent vertebrae having anterior and posterior faces comprising:

a superior support positioned upon a vertebral surface, the superior support having a posterior edge which is flush with a posterior vertebral face, the superior support having an arcuate trough formed therein;

an inferior support positioned upon a vertebral surface in facing relation to the superior support such that a posterior edge of the inferior support is flush with a posterior vertebral face, the inferior support having an arcuate trough formed therein;

a two part shell positioned intermediate the superior and inferior supports, the two part shell having arcuate upper and lower surfaces that correspond to the arcuate troughs formed within the superior and inferior supports;

a threaded screw positioned within the two part shell, rotation of the screw causing its lateral movement to thereby adjust the spacing between the two parts of the shell.

2. A vertebral implant for insertion into an intervertebral space having anterior and posterior areas comprising:

superior and inferior supports positioned upon a vertebral surface in facing relation to one another, both supports being positioned in the posterior area of the intervertebral space;

an insert positioned intermediate the superior and inferior supports, the insert adapted to absorb forces generated in the intervertebral space.

3. The implant as described in claim 2 wherein the insert is formed from upper and lower portions.

4. The implant as described in claim 3 wherein the upper and lower portions are interconnected via a threaded element, wherein movement of the threaded element causes relative movement of the upper and lower portions.

5. The implant as described in claim 2 wherein the superior and inferior supports each include lips that are adapted to hang over an edge of the vertebral body.

6. A vertebral implant specifically adapted for posterior insertion comprising:

a superior support positioned upon a vertebral surface, the superior support having a posterior edge which is flush with a posterior vertebral face;

an inferior support positioned upon a vertebral surface in facing relation to the superior support such that a posterior edge of the inferior support is flush with a posterior vertebral face;

a member positioned intermediate the superior and inferior supports.

7. The vertebral implant as described in claim 6 wherein the member is in the form of a shell with arcuate upper and lower portions.

8. The vertebral implant as described in claim 6 wherein the member is a dampening matrix.

9. The vertebral implant as described in claim 6 wherein the superior and inferior supports include an overhanging lip portion.

10. The vertebral implant as described in claim 6 wherein a spring is positioned between the superior and inferior supports.